YMCA Directors Picketed By Group As 'Unchristian'

N.Y. Amsterdam News, 4-7-45

By S. W. GARLINGTON

Race discrimination in the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) of the City of New York is just as unchristian, unscientific and undemocratic as race discrimination in Hitler's Germany, declares a circular released by the New York unit of CORE (Committee of Racial Equality), 2013 Fifth Avenue at West 125th Street.

CORE does not only make charges, but is striving to correct alleged conditions via picketing the Board of Directors of the City YMCA each time the group meets. Monday a picket line—six strong—marched around in front of the Lawyers Club Building, 115 Broadway, where the City "Y" Board held its monthly meeting. At the previous meeting which was held at a "Y" branch, CORE was busy with a picket line. It is reported by CORE that the Board changed its meeting place from the branches, as is the custom, to confuse the protesting group.

Ashram Leader Leads

Carrying signs reading "Will the YMCA Betray Christ?", "We Are Brothers. . . . Let's Act Like It!", the picket line was headed by Dr. J. Holmes Smith, president of the Harlem Ashram, a co-operative religious group, located at the CORE address. Dr. Smith, also a member of CORE, spent nine years in India as a missionary, led an interracial march to Washington two years ago to dramatize the struggle for racial justice, and headed a picket line in D. C. last year during the poll tax filibuster.

CORE, a national body, has 16 units (chapters) in various cities—including the New York Unit. The local unit started the crusade against the YMCA about two years ago, and reports that since that time progress has been noted along interracial lines in the "Y." However, according to the group, the policy adopted by both the national and the local boards is one of gradualism.

Anti-Gradualism

The gradualism stand of the "Y" is disappointing to CORE, says James Farmer, national chairman. "If the 'Y' wanted to get rid of Jim Crow in the 'Y' it could do so," he said, and added that "The 'Y' bans liquor in all of the branches, but does not ban race poison (racial discrimination). Instead, the parent body leaves it to the members, and the branches dodge the equality issue as long as they can."

Mrs. Dorothy Sullivan, chairman of the local CORE, points out that in the Harlem Branch, the Intercollegiate Branch and the Seaman's Branch, Negroes and whites are given equal service, and they like it. "Why is this policy not followed everywhere in the YMCA's?" After asking this question she stated that she had definite proof that the following forms of race discrimination exist in the local "Y" branches:

The Charges

"The Railroad Branches maintain a lily-white policy, even Negro railway employes being excluded;

"The William Sloane House, largest 'Y' Hotel, sends Negroes to the Harlem 'Y' five miles away;

"The McBurney Branch serves Negro servicemen, but not Negro civilians;

"The Bronx Union 'Y' allows Negro boys to participate in Boys' Clubs, but Negroes 17 or older are excluded from membership and from all its services. The rapidly growing Negro population in this neighborhood desperately needs access to the facilities of this 'Y,' and that

"The West Side Branch has admitted a few 'Token members' during the past year, but still gives Negro applicants 'special handling.'"

CORE, an interracial organization seeking to eliminate all racial discrimination through non-violent methods, urges co-operation in its campaign against race discrimination in the "Y" and other areas.

Discrimination by the "Y"' violates the pronouncements of the National YMCA Board, which is working to eliminate segregation and discrimination in "Y's" throughout the country. PLEASE NOTE: In its national fund-raising drives it uses pictures showing Negro boys as an integral, unsegregated part of the "Y" program. But in practice, the story is different—and violates the Christian principles on which the YMCA is founded.

If you are actively interested in the campaign, CORE suggests that you write to the City YMCA Board, attention of Mr. R. L. Dickinson, chairman, 420 Lexington Avenue, urging abolition of race discrimination throughout the "Y's" of the city.

YMCA Picketed In N.Y., Accused Of Jim Crowism

Chicago Defender 4-7-45

NEW YORK.—The YMCA was under fire this week for race discrimination in its local branches.

The New York Committee of Race Equality which picketed the board of directors' meeting made the following charges:

Railroad branches of the "Y," maintaining a "lily-white" policy, excluded even Negro railway employes.

The William Sloane House, largest "Y" hotel, sends Negroes to the Harlem "Y," five miles away.

The McBurney branch serves Negro servicemen, but not Negro civilians.

The West Side branch has admitted "token memberships" during the past year, but gives Negro applicants "special handling."

R. L. Dickinson, executive vice-president of the "Y," admitted most of the charges, and pleaded that the organization could move only as fast as the members of each branch desired. He stated that the problem of discrimination had been discussed two years ago, but that some branches are slower in acting than others.

Across the Hudson in Summit, N. J., Lawrence Aplin, general secretary of the YMCA, confirmed the fact that YMCA policy would not permit Negroes and whites to swim together. The policy statement was made in answer to the charges that five Negro girls were prevented from enrolling in a swimming class at the "Y" which has the only pool in the city.

The girls, students at the Summit High school, had tried to enroll along with other white students, on the suggestion of their gym teacher. The Negro girls were refused registration.

Aplin stated that years ago Negroes were permitted to swim at the "Y," but the policy had found disfavor in the community.

"There are some communities," he said, "that just aren't ready for such policies."

$53,000 Raised for N.J. Mixed Y

Afro-American md. 1-27-45

JERSEY CITY, N.J.—The $50,000 goal in the drive for the interracial community branch YMCA here was surpassed at the last report meeting when campaigners brought in $10,000 in cash to send the grand total soaring to $53,210, according to Fred W. Martin, general chairman.

The New Jersey YMCA board of directors is to add $450,000 to the $50,000 raised by the Community Branch group and construct a modern building in the Jackson Avenue area in Jersey City.

No one gift was received in the campaign of more than $3,000 and there were exactly three of these, given by F. W. Martin, Dr. D. G. Morris and Dr. M. E. Carpenter. The rest scaled anywhere from a $1,000 to $1. There were a total of 2,263 individual cash contributions.

The number of white contributors was in the neighborhood of 245 individual contributions totaling $3,195, $1,000 of which was contributed by Mayor Frank Hague.

The campaign was directed by Robert B. DeFrantz, formerly of the National Council YMCA, with Fred W. Martin as general chairman. Officers of the branch are Dr. Paul F. Sinclair, chairman of the committee of management; Dr. C. M. Jones, vice-chairman; J. Basil Frazier, secretary, and Rudolph D. Wheeler, executive secretary.

Team captains included: Dave Smith, Basil Frazier, J. J Graves, Bill Carpenter, Nat Johnson, Mac Yelverton, R. R. Smith, F. J Isom, F. R. Conwell, Bill Johnson Ted Oliver and Mrs. E. P. Dixon.

We Do Our Part--But Whites Fail

N.Y. Amsterdam News 6-16-45

Negroes Raise $50,000 For Interracial 'Y' As Manufacturers 'Run Out'

JERSEY CITY, N. J.—The pretentious plans for the erection of a $400,000 Y. M. C. A. building here to be used by all races—in a colored neighborhood—appeared to have collapsed last week, when it was unofficially reported that the $350,000 sought from white manufacturers was not forthcoming. In a special financial drive from December 12 to 22, last year, Negro citizens of the community raised over $50,000 towards the proposed project.

Hailed throughout the country as an unprecedented effort in the Y. M. C. A. movement because of the interracial program which was planned, little doubt was expressed about the success of the drive, financially, since definite asssurances were said to have been made to race leaders of the city by influential Y. M. C. A. executives.

Whites Drop Program

But during recent weeks, it was reliably reported, several leaders responsible for the program among Negroes have been inquiring of white YMCA executives what progress was being made toward raising the $450,000 building that was to be erected in the Negro section of the city, $100,000 was to be used to modernize the 20-year-old Bergen Ave. (Central) Y. M. C. A.

These leaders have been informed, unofficially, it was learned, that the interracial program would have to be dropped, at least temporarily, until other means of obtaining the necessary money could be devised. It was regarded as definite that the $400,000 originally sought from white manufacturers could not be obtained, it was reported. The sudden change in the plans for the interracial YMCA program, the white leaders of the association have informed the race representatives, is not attributed to any changed attitude on the part of Y. M. C. A. heads, but only because of the impasse reached in raising money among the manufacturers.

It is the feeling, however, among many race citizens of the community that the interracial aspect of the proposed YMCA program was the factor which caused the white manufacturers to withdraw their promised financial support. Negro residents are pointing out that the Y. M. C. A. program in